

B3 wherein the third clamp can be moved to approach to the fourth clamp in the second direction.

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to contain a reference to the prior application from which priority is claimed.

The claims are objected to for failing to maintain the original claim numbering during prosecution of the application. The Examiner has renumbered claims 36-57 as 10-31. As a result, claims 10-31 are pending in the application and the Examiner's objection to the claim numbering is rendered moot.

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Claims 10, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunn. Claims 12, 22, and 28-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Dunn in view of Graf et al. Claims 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunn in view of Graf et al. Claims 10, 11, 13-16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn. Claims 12, 22-25 and 28-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn and Graf et al. Claims 17-20, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn.

Claims 11, 17-31 have now been canceled and the Examiner's rejections with respect to those claims are rendered moot.

Claims 10, 13, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunn. The Examiner's rejection to the claims are respectfully traversed. The punch press as disclosed by Dunn comprises a X and Y-axis positioning frame 24. A workpiece is positioned in the punch press in the X-axis direction by servo drive 26 and in the Y-axis direction by servomotor drive 74. In contrast, the punching machine of the present invention positions a workpiece in only one direction, the X-axis, as shown in the illustrative example of Fig. 5, and as now recited in amended claim 10. This limitation is not found in Dunn and it is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 10, 13, 15 and 16 be withdrawn.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Dunn in view of Graf et al. Claim 12 depends from claim 10, and for the reasons claim 10 is allowable, claim 12 is also allowable. Additionally, the Graf et al. punching machine contains a plurality of clamps 80 (Figs. 2 and 3) which cannot be moved independently to alternately position a sheet material, as now recited in amended claim 10. Furthermore, there is no teaching to combine the use of a coiled material as taught by Graft et al. with the punching machine of Dunn.

Claims 10 and 13-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn. The Examiner's rejection to the claims are respectfully traversed. Amended claim 10 recites a punching machine that is positioned in a single direction **during** the punching operation. The Kindgren et al. patent discloses clamps 27 and 28 which are moved independently during the preparation stage of the workpiece. The clamps do not position a workpiece during the punching operation. Furthermore, the Kindgren et al. punching machine positions a workpiece in two

directions. Because Kindgren et al. does not disclose a punching machine that positions a workpiece in a single direction during the operation of the punching operation, it is respectfully requested that the above rejection with respect to claims 10 and 13-16 be withdrawn.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al in view of Dunn and Graf et al. The Examiner's rejection of claim 12 is respectfully traversed. For the reasons that claims 10 and 12 are allowable as stated above with respect to the rejections over Dunn, Graf et al. and Kindgren et al., claim 12 as rejected here is also believed to be allowable.

By the foregoing amendments, Applicants assert that they have placed claims 10 and 12-16 in condition for allowance.

For the reasons stated, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. As all grounds of objections and rejections have been addressed, entry of this Amendment and issuance of a Notice of Allowance of claims 10 and 12-16 are respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to BLANK ROME COMISKY & McCAULEY, LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185(000004.00661). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this response, Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.36(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are

required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claim 10 has been amended as follows:

-- 10. (Amended) A punching machine, comprising:

a body frame having a table, the table supporting a workpiece to be worked;

a first positioning device mounted on the table, the first positioning device positioning the workpiece in a first direction;

a second positioning device mounted on the table, the second positioning device positioning the workpiece in the first direction; and

a working head mounted in the body frame so as to position in a second direction perpendicular to the first direction to punch the workpiece,

wherein the first positioning device and the second positioning device are arranged in series in the first direction[;], thereby the workpiece is positioned only in the first direction by one of the first positioning device and the second positioning device; and the workpiece is not positioned in the second direction; and

wherein the first positioning device and the second positioning device are constructed in a manner such that the first positioning device and the second positioning device may alternately position the workpiece in the first direction during punching operation.

[wherein the first positioning device includes a first clamp to clamp a first margin of the workpiece in the first direction and a second clamp to clamp a second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece; and

wherein the first clamp can be moved to approach to the second clamp in the second direction]--

Claim 12 has been amended as follows:

--12. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [11] 10, wherein the workpiece is sheet shaped material uncoiled from a coiled material.--

Claim 13 has been amended as follows:

-- 13. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [10] 12, wherein the first positioning device is located at one side of the working head on the table; and
the second positioning device is located at the other side of the working head on the table. --

Claim 14 has been amended as follows:

-- 14. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim 10, [further comprising:
a clutch connecting the first positioning device to the second positioning device so that the first and the second positioning devices transfer the workpiece in the first direction simultaneously.]

wherein the first positioning device includes a first clamp to clamp a first margin of the workpiece in the first direction and a second clamp to clamp a second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece; and

wherein the first clamp can be moved to approach to the second clamp in the second direction. --

Claim 15 has been amended as follows:

-- 15. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [10] 14, wherein
[the first positioning device have a plurality of clamps which clamp both margins
parallel to the first direction of the workpiece.]

the first clamp is comprised of a plurality of clamps; and

the second clamp is comprised of a plurality of clamps. --

Claim 16 has been amended as follows:

-- 16. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim 15, wherein
[the second positioning device have a plurality of clamps which clamp both
margins parallel to the first direction of the workpiece.]

the second positioning device includes a third clamp to clamp the first margin of
the workpiece in the first direction and a fourth clamp to clamp the second margin
opposite to the first margin of the workpiece; and

wherein the third clamp can be moved to approach to the fourth clamp in the
second direction. --